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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABIDJAN 000832

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [KPKO](#) [IV](#)  
SUBJECT: UN CLOSELY FOLLOWING IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

REF: A. ABIDJAN 810  
[1](#)B. ABIDJAN 804  
[1](#)C. ABIDJAN 778  
[1](#)D. ABIDJAN 613

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Classified By: Poloff Phaedra Gwyn for reasons 1.4 b&d

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. The United Nations is monitoring the progress of the registration of undocumented Ivoirians, in preparation for elections, and gave a briefing for embassies and international organizations July 25. Reportedly, almost all of the teams sent into rebel-held areas in the north are operating without hindrance, while only a handful of the teams in government-held areas are functioning. The UN is concerned about the low numbers of Ivoirians being documented and the various legal challenges that could be presented to the registrations that the teams are managing to complete. Shortly after the meeting there was renewed violence over these hearings in a town close to Abidjan; one person was killed and several wounded. According to news reports, opposition youths got the upper hand in this latest battle with the pro-Gbagbo Young Patriots; this may well have been a major factor leading to the July 26 announcement of a truce between the two sides. The UN plans to continue these briefings on a weekly basis. The picture they present is not good, but it is at least a start. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) On July 25, the Ambassador and Poloff attended a briefing for resident embassies and international organizations by the head of the Electoral Division of the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (ONUCI) on the mobile courts (audiences foraines -- AF) that are attempting to register undocumented citizens and foreigners born in Cote d'Ivoire (reftels). ONUCI has been closely monitoring the operation of the AF's and reported that the number of AF's working has fluctuated daily, due to attacks by Young Patriots and also logistical problems. ONUCI provided the following information about the number of sites that were reported to be working each day since the AF's started July 17:

On July 17, seven out of 31 sites in the government-held zone and two out of 19 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of nine of the 50 sites.

On July 18, 11 sites in the government-held zone and 11 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of 22 of the 50 sites.

On July 19, seven sites in the government-held zone and 15 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of 22 sites.

On July 20, five sites in the government-held zone and 18 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of 23 sites.

On July 21, four sites in the government-held zone and 18 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of 22 sites.

On July 22, seven sites in the government-held zone and 18 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of 25 sites.

On July 24 (July 23 was a Sunday), once again seven sites in the government-held zone and 18 sites in the rebel-held zone were open, for a total of 25 sites.

13. (C) ONUCI reported that fewer people were registered at these 9-25 sites over the first week than at 7 sites in the May pilot project (ref D), but they did not provide numbers.

ONUCI had three sets of concerns about the future credibility of this project: most of the people being registered are in the north, President Gbagbo continues to challenge the legitimacy of the process by which sixteen of the judges were appointed, and so far the National Commission for the Supervision of Identification and the Independent Electoral Commission have not been present to monitor the proceedings.

14. (C) In the rebel New Forces (FN) zone, ONUCI reported few problems. All political parties except President Gbagbo's FPI (Ivoirian Popular Front) have sent observers to at least some of the sites in the north. Over 1000 NF soldiers reportedly have been registered in Korhogo. ONUCI did note that the judges denied Ivoirian nationality to the sister-in-law of former Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara, leader of the opposition RDR (Rally of Republicans) party. (Note: Gbagbo supporters continue to assert that Ouattara himself is not Ivoirian.) UN observers also noticed some cases of duplicate applications in the northern rebel capital of Bouake. The hearings were immediately stopped to address the problem.

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15. (U) In the government-controlled south, the center and west of the country have seen the most violence. The areas surrounding San Pedro, Daloa, and Guiglo are especially tense. Indeed, all hearings in the south are taking place in the center-east to eastern region. Though no magistrates have been injured yet, their right to circulate freely has been repeatedly challenged. In one incident, Young Patriots looted the overnment documents and burned a vehicle of an AF team in the center-west town of Sinfra. In Dimboro, over one hundred Young Patriots protesting te hearings burned down the house of the local dirctor of AF operations.

16. (C) Indeed, there wa more violence on the afternoon of July 25, afte the ONUCI briefing, this time in the coastal reort town of Grand Bassam near Abidjan. According o press reports, one person was killed and severa were injured during a fight between Young Patriits and opposition youth groups. An Ivoirian NGOcontact whose office is right next to where the ncident occurred told us that applicants were awiting the arrival of the AF judges when about one hundred Young Patriots who were bussed in from neaby towns arrived to block the hearings. Oppositon youth succeeded in forcing the Young Patriotsto flee, taking refuge at the headquarters of th General Council of Grand Bassam (NOTE: The President of the General Council is FPI). According to ewspapers reports, the opposition youth followedthe Young Patriots to the General Council headqurters where they attempted to enter the building. Someone from inside reportedly shot and killed one opposition youth and they then left the scene. Several people were also wounded. Opposition youth later reportedly ransacked the offices of the local FPI headquarters and the home of the President of the General Council, where they also burned several vehicles. This incident, in which opposition youth appearently got the upper hand over the Young Patriots, may well have been a major factor leading to the July 26 announcement of a truce between

the Young Patriots and the youth groups of three out of the four main opposition parties: the PDCI (Democratic Party of Cote d'Ivoire), RDR (Rally of Republicans) and the MFA (Movement of Forces for the Future). The youth group from the fourth main opposition party, the UDPCI (Union for Democracy and Peace in Cote d'Ivoire), declined to be a party to the truce.

17. (C) Comment: ONUCI plans to provide these briefings on a weekly basis; they should provide an objective and reasonably accurate picture of how the AF's are proceeding. So far the picture does not look good. Even under the best of circumstances, the AF's would have been able to register only a fraction of the some 4 million undocumented people living in Cote d'Ivoire in the two-month period they were given. The operation will take far more than two months but at least the process has started. End Comment.

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